

UNITED FOR THE YUBA



# Strategic Plan

2019 - 2023





## SOUTH YUBA RIVER CITIZENS LEAGUE

Dear Friends,

With over 36 years of achievements, 3,500 members, and 1,000 active volunteers, SYRCL is doing great things for the Yuba watershed. In 2012 and again in 2015, the SYRCL Board adopted a comprehensive strategic plan to guide us in fulfilling our mission *to unite the community to protect and restore the Yuba River watershed*. We are proud to report that we made significant progress in every priority area of that plan.

Now we are pleased to present this revised and updated five-year plan, which will guide our work from 2019 through 2023. This plan was compiled with insight from those 36 years of organizational growth, learning, and success; from staff at all levels, our committee members, and Board of Directors. Some areas of our work remain similar to their beginnings—river monitoring, Wild & Scenic Film Festival, the Cleanup—while others are more holistic and forward-looking, aiming to address local impacts of emergent issues such as climate change and a sustainable water future.

Taking on these large issues in the context of a healthy watershed could feel daunting. However, our strong base of support and thriving, diverse partnerships inspire confidence in tackling these issues. More important is our commitment to this place, the Yuba River watershed. SYRCL asks you to join us in this commitment.

**This plan is an open invitation to Yuba River lovers to engage personally in the protection and restoration of the watershed.** No matter who you are and how you love the river, this plan provides opportunities for you to volunteer and get involved.

SYRCL understands that there is strength in numbers. That is why we encourage all Yuba River lovers to volunteer, donate, and join as dues-paying members so your voice can be counted on behalf of the river. With your active support, SYRCL intends to remain as the central hub for community activism to protect, restore, and celebrate this watershed we love.

Together, we are extending our powerful coalition from the summit to the sea.

*For the Yuba,*

Melinda Booth  
Executive Director

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## Strategic Planning Group Roster

### Board of Directors

Shana Maziarz, *Co-President*  
Debra Weistar, *Co-President*  
Jeff Odefey, *Vice President*  
John Regan, *Secretary*  
Janet Peake, *Treasurer*  
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Brian Bisnett  
Peter Burnes  
Marty Coleman-Hunt  
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George Olive  
Isaac Silverman

### Staff Leads

Daniel Belshe,  
*Community Engagement Manager*  
Melinda Booth, *Executive Director*  
Jorie Emory, *Film Festival Producer*  
Rachel Hutchinson, *River Science Director*  
Andrea Mason, *Finance Manager*  
Ashley Overhouse, *River Policy Manager*  
Julie Pokrandt, *Development Director*

### Advocacy Committee

Isaac Silverman, *Chair*  
Brian Bisnett  
Melinda Booth  
Peter Burnes  
Allan Eberhart  
Roger Hicks  
Rachel Hutchinson

Peter Van Zant  
Shana Maziarz  
Julie Pokrandt  
John Regan  
Gary Reedy  
Traci Sheehan

### Wild & Scenic Film Festival Committee

Jorie Emory, *Chair*  
Joseph Bell  
Melinda Booth  
Barbara Getz  
Roger Hicks  
Howard Levine  
Kurt Lorenz  
Jess Swigonski  
Debra Weistar

### River Education Committee

Rachel Lubitz, *Chair*  
Alex Ezzell  
Gary Griffith  
Rachel Hutchinson  
Shana Maziarz  
Josh Miller  
George Olive

### Finance & Fundraising Committee

Andrea Mason, *Co-Chair*  
Julie Pokrandt, *Co-Chair*  
Melinda Booth  
Rachel Hutchinson  
Janet Peake

## Mission, Vision, and Values

### Mission Statement:

*SYRCL unites the community to protect and restore the Yuba River watershed.*

### Vision Statement:

*We envision a future in which the Yuba River watershed thrives and is resilient in the face of climate change. We envision a free-flowing Yuba and healthy ecosystems that support wildlife and people—from the ridges to the canyons and the summit to the sea.*

*We envision a community that reflects the relationship between a healthy watershed and human quality of life; one that values a sustainable water future; one that celebrates the Yuba River’s natural and cultural heritage.*

*We envision a vibrant, science-based community organization that serves as a leader for environmental stewardship and activism in the Yuba River watershed—and that inspires others to make a difference in their communities.*

### Values Statements:

*The natural environment is essential to human harmony and livelihood.*

*As all rivers connect communities, we know that our work here inspires people beyond our watershed. We pledge to conduct ourselves with the utmost integrity and respect for the diversity of opinion and life experiences of others.*

*“People Can Save a River.” This founding premise inspires, empowers, and emboldens us to take collective action against threats to the Yuba’s waters and ecosystems.*

*A shared river environment that is safe, accessible, and welcoming requires the community’s attention to maintain the health of the river and its watershed.*

*SYRCL cultivates a professional and personally enriching work environment, which supports our dedicated team of staff, Board, and volunteers. Recognizing ourselves as a true “citizens league,” our work is inspired by the Yuba and driven by the community.*

## Strategic Goals

SYRCL works on behalf of the Yuba River watershed on a range of issues related to ecosystem health and the watershed as a whole. However, the scope of our work is not unequivocally defined by the watershed's physical boundaries but rather is determined by the potential impacts and threats to the watershed. SYRCL's diverse programs and work therefore mirror the interconnected nature of water and ecosystems, both natural and human-made.

The below three strategic goals guide our decision-making and are reflected across programs in our five-year plan.

**Yuba River Community Engagement Goal:** SYRCL is recognized as an accessible and responsive leader in community engagement and information exchange concerning watershed issues.

**Landscape Level Conservation and Restoration Goal:** SYRCL engages in work that fits within a larger context and has a positive impact at a landscape level. This highly collaborative practice leverages our effectiveness by strengthening strategic partnerships to accomplish our goals.

**Climate Change Resilience Goal:** SYRCL's advocacy, science, restoration, and outreach work contributes to ecosystem and community resilience to climate change including progress toward a secure and sustainable water future.

## Program Goals

### River Advocacy: General

- Lead the community to defend and restore the Yuba River watershed.

### River Advocacy: Sustainable Water Future

- Advocate for long-term solutions for sustainable water management in the Yuba River watershed.

### River Advocacy: Yuba Salmon Now

- Advocate for a healthier watershed by restoring self-sustaining populations of wild salmon and steelhead trout to diverse habitats.

### River Advocacy: Hydropower

- Advocate for watershed health including improved river flows, fish passage, rearing habitat, spawning habitat, barriers to outmigration, and recreational opportunities in hydropower dam licenses.

### River Science: General

- Ensure that SYRCL conducts and disseminates the best available science.

### River Science: River Restoration

- Improve the resiliency of the Yuba River watershed by implementing habitat restoration projects that protect the river, wildlife, forests, and meadows especially in the face of climate change.

### River Science: River Monitoring

- Collect and interpret water quality data to assess the health of the Yuba River and its tributaries to identify threats, impacts, and ensure regulatory compliance.

### River People

- Strive to be the leader in the Yuba River watershed for community engagement, outreach, activism, and information exchange concerning watershed issues.

### River Education

- Educate people of all ages and backgrounds representative of the communities within the watershed to be informed and passionate stewards of the Yuba watershed and effective, lifelong advocates for its protection.

### Wild & Scenic Film Festival

- Produce a world-class, sustainable, and financially successful Wild & Scenic Film Festival that educates and inspires activism in our watershed and communities around the globe.

### Development & Membership

- Meet SYRCL's financial needs through diversified income sources and build a sustainable funding base, which includes individuals, businesses, and organizations who are committed to SYRCL's long term vision and sustainability.



## **Communications**

- Position SYRCL as a leader to funders, partners, members, volunteers, and decision-makers by telling compelling stories about our work that (a) showcase programs, partnerships, and impacts and (b) inspire people to take meaningful action within the Yuba watershed and beyond.

## **Board Governance & Organizational Leadership**

- Support exceptional Board governance and diverse organizational leadership that advance SYRCL's mission and long-term sustainability.

## **Finance & Operations**

- Utilize best practices to ensure sound fiscal management with strong internal controls and oversight, and create an organizational culture that supports staff in fulfilling SYRCL's mission.

## Executive Summary

### I. Introduction

More than thirty-five years ago, this community came together to stop dams on the South Yuba River and proved that *people can save a river*. Along the way, the South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) was created with a mission to unite the community to protect and restore the Yuba River watershed. Today, SYRCL serves as the central hub for community engagement, volunteerism, activism, science, outreach, education, and information exchange for the Yuba River.

SYRCL's strategic plan is our newly updated 5-year plan, which will guide us from 2019 through 2023. No matter who you are and how you love the river, this action plan provides multiple opportunities for you to get involved.

### II. Strategic Plan's Highlights

In 2018, SYRCL's Board and staff embarked on a five-year *Strategic Plan*, building on past successes and introducing new and expanded initiatives.

SYRCL's programmatic work is organized into several coordinated departments including River Advocacy, River People, River Education, River Science, and the Wild & Scenic Film Festival. This document identifies the goals, strategies, and objectives that we hope to accomplish over the next five years with the community's active support.

*Below, each department's major programs for the next five years are highlighted.*

#### River Advocacy

**SYRCL's role as an advocacy organization is to take action whenever necessary; to have the skills and capacity to serve as the voice for the river; and to mobilize river lovers to defend against threats to the Yuba River watershed.** While the core of SYRCL's advocacy work is focused on salmon restoration and dam relicensing, we remain vigilant and prepared for unexpected threats in the watershed—such as the fight against Centennial Dam. Whenever proposals like these come to light, we engage and act as needed.

#### *Sustainable Water Future*

Water distribution and management is a hotly contested topic in California. While SYRCL is fortunate to be located in a water-rich region, our water future is still uncertain in the face of climate change and population growth. For our region, precipitation will show extreme variability both over longer time frames as we switch between very wet and very dry periods, and within each year as more extreme weather events become more common. These variable flows could have an enormous impact on safety (like the spillway damage in 2016-17 at Oroville Dam nearby), agricultural stability (such as adequate irrigation in dry years), and ecosystem processes (like damage to riparian restoration sites from both high and low flows).

That said, **SYRCL has a role as a community stakeholder and as the Yuba River Waterkeeper to unite and prepare the community and the Yuba River watershed to achieve climate resilience.** SYRCL's advocacy efforts are informed by science and aim to help our communities prepare and understand how climate change will affect our surface and groundwater resources.

### *Yuba Salmon Now*

SYRCL recognizes that salmon are indicators of watershed health. SYRCL's salmon restoration goals permeate nearly every aspect of SYRCL's strategic plan including dam relicensing, habitat restoration, and public education efforts. Even though both the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) have identified the Yuba River as the best opportunity in the Sierra to restore wild salmon, Yuba River salmon and steelhead numbers are at all-time lows. **SYRCL's work is focused on protecting the river corridor, implementing large-scale restoration projects, and improving flows.** We hope short-term gains can be made while we work to develop a supportive constituency that will provide creative solutions for volitional fish passage at Daguerre Point and Englebright dams.

### *Hydropower*

Over the last decade, SYRCL has participated in a once-in-a-generation opportunity to advocate for improved flows, water quality, fish passage, restored habitat and ecosystems, and recreational opportunities through dam relicensing for the hydroelectric dams in the Yuba River watershed.

Under the umbrella of the Foothills Water Network (FWN), SYRCL partners with other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and federal and state agencies to advocate for improved conditions at relicensing meetings. **SYRCL is committed to taking a leadership role when the federal government renews licenses for Yuba dams.**

### River Science

**The purpose of SYRCL's River Science program is to collect scientific data about the Yuba River watershed and to ensure that our policy, water quality monitoring, restoration, and education work is informed by the best available science.** Our River Science department continuously reassesses itself as new information about the Yuba River becomes available; this is especially important within the context of climate change.

### *River Restoration*

SYRCL's science-based restoration work is informed by the best available science and adds to the greater body of knowledge about how the ecosystem and target species benefit from habitat restoration. **Our projects focus on creating fish spawning and rearing habitat, restoring forest resiliency, and promoting meadow health.** SYRCL focuses on restoring ecosystem function and monitoring critical watershed features in the face of historic habitat degradation and climate change. SYRCL's restoration program now boasts a handful of large-scale, multi-year restoration efforts which require multi-agency partnerships, contractors, large equipment, and long-term monitoring.

### *Lower Yuba Restoration*

**Restoration in the Lower Yuba will protect habitat and create riparian and floodplain habitat connectivity, fish spawning and rearing habitat, and ensure that fish can swim freely within the 24-mile stretch of river.** SYRCL is funded to partner with the Hallwood Restoration Team to restore 170 acres of Lower Yuba habitat and to lead the Long Bar Restoration Project on an additional 50 acres of habitat restoration.

### *Forest Health*

Forest health in the Yuba River watershed will become a key focus of our work over the next five years. **SYRCL will partner with the United States Forest Service (USFS) and private land owners, and other nonprofits to plan and implement forest health projects across the Yuba watershed.** Removal of invasive plants will reduce fire risk and improve biodiversity. Remediating abandoned mine lands will protect the watershed from legacy mining impacts like mercury and sediment contamination. Promoting sustainable farming practices and remediating illegal grow sites will protect the Yuba watershed from the cumulative impact of cannabis farms as the industry grows. Restoring forest health through thinning and prescribed fire will improve forest habitat, protect water supply, and decrease the risk of high severity fire.

### *Meadow Restoration*

**Meadow restoration is focused on protecting headwater environments** to improve groundwater storage, maintain summer stream flows, improve water quality, increase carbon sequestration, and bolster species diversity within the watershed. Today, SYRCL is working on restoring over 1,000 acres of meadows in the Yuba watershed. SYRCL is partnering with the USFS, local land trusts, universities, the Sierra Meadow Partnership, and others to complete this work.

### *Cannabis Cultivation Impacts*

**SYRCL leads the “Growing Green for the Yuba” program to address the negative impacts of cannabis cultivation such as water diversions, overuse of fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals, and clear cutting.** We will continue to host informative workshops for growers about the best management practices in sustainable and ecologically sound cannabis cultivation in the Yuba watershed and work with public lands managers to remediate and monitor large, illegal grow sites.

### *River Monitoring*

Guided by a 2014 River Monitoring Plan, SYRCL’s citizen-science water quality program assesses conditions across the Yuba River watershed. **SYRCL science staff and citizen scientists have identified seven priority issues and are conducting in-depth sampling efforts to document threats to the watershed.**

### **River People**

The River People program is at the heart of SYRCL’s mission to *unite the community*. It is where our members and volunteers come together to take action, exchange information, engage with our diverse

neighbors and visitors, and volunteer on projects large and small to protect the Yuba and Bear River watersheds—all with an aim to create a culture of river stewardship. **SYRCL strives to keep our members, volunteers and the general public well-informed and engaged.** That’s why we publish an e-newsletter every two weeks and host an annual “State of the Yuba” forum in April.

### *SYRCL’s Volunteer Program*

This strategic plan calls for growing the number of volunteers in all aspects of SYRCL’s work to encourage increased stewardship. **We will focus on sustaining the excellence of our volunteer corps and strive to improve their experience with our projects, programs, and events.** In the next five years, we hope our volunteer team will have significant representation from the Bear River, all three forks of the Yuba, and even from localities in the Bay Area.

### *Yuba River Cleanup*

**SYRCL’s River People program engages the community annually in the Yuba River Cleanup the 3rd Saturday of September.** Over the past 21 cleanups (1998-2018), our volunteers have removed more than 190,483 pounds of trash and 43,154 pounds of recyclables (greater than 100 tons) from 80-90 miles of rivers and creeks. Our vision is that more and more families, from Marysville to Placerville, from Camptonville to Truckee and beyond, will join the annual fall Cleanup.

### *River Ambassadors*

Thanks to our long-term partnership with California State Parks, SYRCL’s River Ambassador program, launched in 2012, recruits and trains volunteers to speak one-on-one with visitors at the four major crossings within the South Yuba River State Park. **Using a friendly, non-confrontational approach, River Ambassadors educate folks about the polluting impacts of trash and dog waste, the dangers of broken glass, and the catastrophic potential of wildfire.** As of 2018, River Ambassadors logged 6,057 hours on the river and spoke with 48,757 people about Yuba stewardship. Our goal is to continue to engage South Yuba River State Park visitors while searching for opportunities to replicate our own model on other areas of public land within our watershed.

### River Education

**SYRCL provides education that aims to create life-long stewards of the Yuba River watershed.** We do this through programs and curriculum that incorporate lessons about watershed health, Yuba salmon, climate change, water conservation, outdoor experiential learning, and scientific monitoring to students of all levels. To accomplish our goals and objectives, we strive to utilize high quality curricula that are in accordance with local, state, and national standards; empower, engage, and collaborate with local teachers and administrators; and create linkages between the River Education program and other areas of SYRCL’s work.

### *Yuba Salmon Expeditions*

Many Yuba watershed residents are unaware that 300,000 salmon once returned to the Yuba every year before the major dams were built; now as few as 3,000 return annually. **We offer rafting and walking Salmon Expeditions for school groups and the public to learn about the salmon**

**life cycle first-hand.** Between 500 and 700 students participate in our Salmon Tours each fall – and we hope to see that number grow each year.

#### *School Assemblies*

Our program reaches students within their schools aiming to make watershed stewardship an annual topic. **We do this by offering two interactive assembly programs, “The Great Water Mystery” and “Journey of the Salmon.”** Having reached over 20,000 students from 2015-2018, our goal is to continue to offer these popular programs to youth region-wide. And, SYRCL’s water audit program allows students to take action to conserve water at their very own schools.

#### *Field Science*

**Our Field Science Program engages high school students to experience first-hand what it means to work as a field scientist.** We take groups of students on multi-day field trips to learn about the Yuba River watershed and become citizen scientists by assisting with monitoring our restoration projects and water quality across the watershed and participating in restoration work. This experiential, outdoor learning opportunity allows them to participate in SYRCL’s work and exposes them to field work.

#### *Youth Environmentalist of the Year Scholarship*

High school graduates with a commitment to the environment are encouraged to apply for SYRCL’s “Youth Environmentalist of the Year” scholarship. **Since 2002, SYRCL has awarded a \$4,000 college scholarship each year.**

#### **Wild & Scenic Film Festival**

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival enters its 18<sup>th</sup> year with a strong foundation and a proven track record of success. What began as a two-day festival with one venue has grown to a five-day festival with more than ten film venues in both Nevada City and Grass Valley. In 2019, we screened 150 films and brought 100 filmmakers and guests to present at the festival. 5,600 people attended from near and far with 50% of the audience coming from the local area. An additional 2,400 K-12 students participated in our School Program. **The film festival aims to inspire environmental action through the powerful medium of film,** while raising funds for our year-round work.

#### *Film Festival On Tour*

Wild & Scenic Film Festival On Tour brings the best and brightest environmental and adventure films to nearly 250 events each year. **On Tour is designed to provide other national and international organizations with a turn-key event that increases their membership, raises funds, and inspires activism in their community.**



### III. Acknowledgements

This *Strategic Plan* update was led by SYRCL's senior staff in coordination with the Board of Directors and our standing committees. On behalf of the Board, we would like to thank:

- The staff leads for each section: Daniel Belshe, Melinda Booth, Jorie Emory, Rachel Hutchinson, Andrea Mason, Ashley Overhouse, Julie Pokrandt.
- The Board and its advisory committees: Advocacy Committee, Education Committee, Wild & Scenic Film Festival Committee, and Fund & Finance Committee.
- Our many wonderful and generous partners - the businesses, agencies, foundations and individuals who stand by us in good times and bad.
- Keri Rinne, for facilitating two strategic planning sessions with the SYRCL board.
- George Olive for editing this document.

## Program Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

## River Advocacy: General

**Core goal:** Lead the community to defend and protect the Yuba River watershed.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Build lasting protections for the Yuba River watershed.
- 2) Respond to unexpected threats and leverage opportunities in the Yuba River watershed.

### **Background:**

*People Can Save a River* is SYRCL's guiding principle. Since our founding more than thirty-five years ago, SYRCL has defended the Yuba River time and time again. As effective advocates, we know when to mobilize the community for direct action and when to send in diplomats for quiet negotiations.

While the core of SYRCL's advocacy work is focused on salmon restoration and dam relicensing, we remain vigilant and prepared to anticipate and respond to any future threats such as proposals to reopen mines and build new dams.

SYRCL's advocacy work also recognizes that climate change is a real, and present, threat to the Yuba River watershed. In light of the super storms and extreme drought we're facing, it is now more important than ever to unite the community to achieve a sustainable water future.

SYRCL staff and volunteers monitor boardrooms and the halls of government, build effective relationships with elected officials and staff, and forge powerful coalitions to ensure that new policies, plans, and proposals consider what's best for the Yuba River.

We participate as a member of the global Waterkeeper Alliance (WKA), helping to keep our waters clean—and drinkable, fishable, and swimmable for all. Our status as Yuba River Waterkeeper ensures additional protections and advocacy for the Yuba River watershed by utilizing resources from the largest coalition of water nonprofit organizations in the country.

Whether it's through direct action campaigns, negotiation, or litigation, SYRCL's River Advocacy plan is about uniting the community to protect the Yuba River.

### **Objectives & Strategies:**

1. Objective: Build lasting protections for the Yuba River watershed.
  - 1.1. Strategy: Track, engage, and take positions as needed in public policy, planning, and collaborative processes that impact the Yuba River watershed.
  - 1.2. Strategy: Advocate for sustainable forest health in the Yuba River watershed.
  - 1.3. Strategy: Advocate for and increase awareness of important safety measures in the Yuba River watershed.
  - 1.4. Strategy: Build and sustain organizational relationships with officials at the counties, cities, water agencies, and tribes in the Yuba River watershed.

- 1.5. Strategy: Collaborate with key stakeholders to protect the Yuba River watershed.
- 2. Objective: Respond to unexpected threats and leverage opportunities in the Yuba River watershed.
  - 2.1. Strategy: Ensure that SYRCL has the capacity to anticipate and respond to watershed threats.
  - 2.2. Strategy: Apply SYRCL's scientific capacity to discern threats and take informed action.
  - 2.3. Strategy: Prepare and inform our communities and our watershed for the adverse effects of climate change.

*Please note: Some of the preceding goals are dependent upon additional resources, new staff capacity, and increased volunteer participation in order to be fully implemented. We need your support – please donate today.*

## River Advocacy: Sustainable Water Future

**Core goal:** Advocate for long-term solutions for sustainable water management in the Yuba River watershed.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Engage with stakeholders in the community to promote sustainable water use.
- 2) Collaborate with local water districts and other government agencies to plan and implement sustainable water practices.
- 3) Inform the public about the unintended climate impacts of hydropower generation and large dam projects in order to achieve a sustainable water future.

### Background:

Water distribution and management is a hotly contested topic in California. While SYRCL is fortunate to be located in a water-rich region, our water future is still uncertain in the face of climate change and population growth. The consensus is that the era of building dams is over, as the best sites have already been developed. Also, reservoirs contribute to climate warming and are less effective than groundwater in coping with a series of drought years. For our region, precipitation will show extreme variability both over longer time frames as we switch between very wet and very dry periods, and within each year as more extreme weather events become more common. These variable flows could have an enormous impact on safety (like the spillway damage in 2016-17 at Oroville Dam nearby), agricultural stability (such as adequate irrigation in dry years), and ecosystem processes (like damage to riparian restoration sites from both high and low flows). Simultaneously, Yuba waters are likely to attract increasing interest from rapidly growing population centers in the Central Valley and beyond.

SYRCL's role as a community stakeholder and as the Yuba River Waterkeeper is to unite and prepare the community and the Yuba River watershed through strategic actions that will increase climate resiliency and ensure adequate supply for local needs. SYRCL's advocacy efforts are informed by science and aim to help our communities prepare and understand how climate change will affect our surface and groundwater resources.

### Objective & Strategies:

1. Objective: Engage with stakeholders in the community to promote sustainable water use.
  - 1.1. Strategy: Work with community members and agricultural stakeholders on best management practices for water conservation based on the best available science.
  - 1.2. Strategy: Participate and attend important stakeholder and community meetings to foster collaboration and improve community capacity.
  - 1.3. Strategy: Stop the proposed Centennial Dam on the Bear River from being built.

2. Objective: Partner with local water districts and other government agencies to plan and implement sustainable water practices.
  - 2.1. Strategy: Advocate for adaptive management approaches by participating in regulatory processes such as the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act processes.
  - 2.2. Strategy: Research and advance technologies relevant to water storage, agricultural and urban conservation, and improved management of riparian and meadow corridors.
  - 2.3. Strategy: Collaborate with policy decision makers and agricultural stakeholders to develop a sustainable water plan for the Yuba River watershed.
  - 2.4. Strategy: Monitor local, regional, and statewide policy and planning processes to evaluate their impacts on the Yuba River watershed.
3. Objective: Inform the public about the unintended climate impacts of hydropower generation and large dam projects to promote a sustainable water future.
  - 3.1. Strategy: Work with partners (CHRC, FWN, WKA) to evaluate specific climate impacts from hydropower generation and dams in the Yuba River watershed.
  - 3.2. Strategy: Provide information to the general public that details the negative environmental consequences of hydropower generation and large dam projects.
  - 3.3. Strategy: Advocate for alternative water conservation, storage, and supply solutions through multi-benefit projects that mitigate the environmental impacts of hydropower generation and large dam projects.

*Please note: Some of the preceding goals are dependent upon additional resources, new staff capacity, and increased volunteer participation in order to be fully implemented. We need your support – please donate today.*



## River Advocacy: Yuba Salmon Now

**Core goal:** Advocate for a healthier watershed by restoring self-sustaining populations of wild salmon and steelhead trout to diverse habitats.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Build widespread community and government support for salmon restoration and volitional fish passage.
- 2) Restore salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon habitat in the Lower Yuba River.
- 3) Restore volitional salmon runs in the Yuba River watershed.

### **Background:**

SYRCL recognizes that salmon are indicators of watershed health – like the canary in the coal mine – if salmon thrive, the Yuba River thrives too. SYRCL's salmon restoration goals permeate nearly every aspect of SYRCL's strategic plan including dam relicensing, habitat restoration, and public education efforts.

Since the late 1990s, SYRCL has prioritized restoring wild salmon to the watershed. Today, the need is no less urgent. Even though both the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) have identified the Yuba River as the best opportunity in the Sierra to restore wild salmon, Yuba River salmon and steelhead numbers are at all-time lows.

SYRCL's work is focused on protecting the river corridor, implementing large scale restoration projects, and improving flows so that short-term gains can be made while we work to develop a supportive constituency that will provide creative solutions for volitional fish passage at Daguerre Point and Englebright dams.

#### *Legal Action over Dams*

In 2006, SYRCL sued the federal government to demand better protection for the Yuba's wild fish. In February 2012, NMFS released a biological opinion, which found that the operation of two Army Corps of Engineers' dams on the Yuba River are likely to jeopardize the survival of three species of endangered fish: spring-run Chinook salmon, steelhead, and green sturgeon. Most importantly, the biological opinion required the Corps to implement a program to provide fish passage past the dams by 2020.

In 2014, NMFS reversed its position on the Corps' responsibility for their dams' impacts to threatened fish. The Corps is no longer required to improve fish passage at the dams. Mandatory measures contained in previous Yuba River biological opinions, such as requiring the Corps to place spawning gravel and woody material in the river to provide safe havens for juvenile fish, are now voluntary.

#### *Lower Yuba River Restoration and Fish Passage*

Today, SYRCL is focused on restoring habitat in the Lower Yuba River to support declining populations of salmon, steelhead, and green sturgeon. This strategy will protect fish from the impacts of climate change by creating more habitat and should increase outmigration to the ocean and spawning success rates. Over the next five years, SYRCL is committed to restoring as much salmon rearing and spawning habitat

as possible, with funding for more than 200 acres already secured. We expect this work will result in a healthier ecosystem and an increase in fish populations.

Additionally, another key element of this strategy is the removal of Daguerre Point Dam which currently delays and obstructs the passage of Chinook, steelhead, and green sturgeon. For the first time in recent history, green sturgeon spawning was documented below Daguerre Point Dam in 2018. In NMFS's recovery plans for both Chinook and green sturgeon, improving passage at Daguerre Point Dam is listed as a recommended recovery action. Daguerre Point Dam also provides essential water deliveries which must be maintained when the dam is removed. Technological advances and examples of small dam removals that have maintained water delivery infrastructure and mitigated flood risk will be utilized to undertake this effort. We look forward to working with our partners and local stakeholders on the removal of Daguerre Point Dam over the next decade.

SYRCL understands that salmon restoration work extends far beyond our watershed and we intend to continue to link our advocacy efforts with salmon advocates from the summit to the sea, contributing to comprehensive and long-term recovery of native fish populations and watershed health.

### **Objectives & Strategies:**

1. Objective: Build widespread community and government support for salmon restoration and volitional fish passage.
  - 1.1. Strategy: Continue the Yuba Salmon Now Campaign and build widespread community and government support for salmon restoration.
  - 1.2. Strategy: Educate the public about the opportunities, benefits, and challenges involved in salmon restoration in the Yuba River watershed.
  - 1.3. Strategy: Educate the public about the benefits of dam removal and evaluate and address community safety concerns.
2. Objective: Restore salmon, steelhead, and green sturgeon habitat in the Lower Yuba River.
  - 2.1. Strategy: Ensure that plans for fish passage and habitat restoration are guided by the best science and supported by watershed stakeholders.
  - 2.2. Strategy: Identify and publish a prioritized list of salmon restoration projects for the Lower Yuba River.
  - 2.3. Strategy: Define a timeline to implement salmon habitat restoration projects in the Lower Yuba River.
  - 2.4. Strategy: Advocate for increased funds from relevant local, state, and federal agencies dedicated to restoration projects on the Lower Yuba River.
3. Objective: Restore volitional salmon runs in the Yuba River watershed.
  - 3.1. Strategy: Secure a fish passage plan to the upper Yuba River that includes volitional fish passage over large impoundments.
  - 3.2. Strategy: Work towards removal of Daguerre Point Dam while ensuring water delivery security.
  - 3.3. Strategy: Improve the wild fish component of Yuba River salmon and trout populations

## River Advocacy: Hydropower

**Core goal:** Advocate for watershed health including improved river flows, fish passage, rearing habitat, spawning habitat, barriers to outmigration, and recreational opportunities in dam and hydropower licenses.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Secure FERC licenses that significantly improve the health of the Yuba River watershed through improved river flows, fish passage, habitat, and recreational opportunities.
- 2) Ensure that the terms of the FERC licenses are fully implemented over the long-term.

### Background:

The hydroelectric facilities and associated dams in the Yuba River watershed are regulated through 30–50 year licenses issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Over the last decade, SYRCL has participated in a once-in-a-generation opportunity to advocate for improved flows, water quality, fish passage, restored habitat and ecosystems, and recreational opportunities through the dam relicensing process.

Under the umbrella of the Foothills Water Network (FWN), SYRCL partners with other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and federal and state agencies to advocate for improved conditions at relicensing meetings. This is a difficult, time-consuming, and arcane process which is not welcoming to public participation. Nevertheless, our staff and volunteers need to be present and fully engaged as the decisions made today will have consequences for decades. SYRCL is committed to taking a leadership role to ensure that when the federal government renews licenses for Yuba dams, those license terms restore watershed health by protecting native species, improving water quality and habitat, and increasing in-stream flows.

#### *NID and PG&E Hydropower Projects*

In 2014, FERC issued a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Nevada Irrigation District's (NID) and PG&E's hydropower project that approves enhancement of the South Fork and Middle Fork Yuba with much higher minimum in-stream flows and a variety of protections for the environment. The plan for the new licenses also includes innovative rules for managing the way water is spilled over dams to restore important characteristics of natural spring flows, improve the health of the river, and whitewater boating opportunities. While SYRCL will continue to work toward additional gains, the proposed set of new license terms represents a tremendous improvement over current river conditions. SYRCL will also continue to be actively engaged in the FERC relicensing processes for any newly acquired hydropower operation facilities in the next five years.

#### *YWA Hydropower Projects*

Yuba Water Agency's (YWA) Yuba River Development Project affects the North, Middle, and Lower Yuba River. The FEIS was issued in 2019 after nearly a decade of negotiations with FERC, YWA, and our agency and NGO partners. We have and will continue to advocate for improved river flows and habitat within this project, especially given the voluntary agreements for habitat restoration and flow augmentation made

during the approval of The Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan. We look forward to continuing to work with stakeholders to finalize details in the voluntary settlement agreements and the FEIS implementation to ensure and maximize FERC and Bay-Delta Plan flow and habitat measures which will benefit the Yuba River watershed.

#### *License Implementation*

Over the next five years, SYRCL will continue to work with relicensing participants to ensure that further improvements for the Yuba River can be designed, secured, or implemented. At the same time, we will work with the State Board, NMFS, and other permitting agencies to expedite the new licenses while ensuring a comprehensive environmental process. We will work with YWA, NID, and any other hydropower operator in the Yuba River watershed to further design and negotiate for a variety of river restoration measures, including enhanced flows below their dams, a well-funded program of monitoring and evaluation, adaptive management, and habitat restoration.

#### **Objectives & Strategies:**

1. Objective: Secure FERC licenses that significantly improve the health of the Yuba River through improved river flows, fish passage and habitat, and expanded recreational opportunities.
  - 1.1. Strategy: Secure YWA, NID, PG&E and other agencies' commitment to early implementation of certain measures that will improve overall river conditions and recreational opportunities.
  - 1.2. Strategy: Work with partners (FWN & CHRC) to ensure that the relicensing of Narrows Hydroelectric Project results in increased habitat restoration and flows for the Lower Yuba River.
  - 1.3. Strategy: Keep SYRCL community updated on progress in the YRDP licensing process.
2. Objective: Ensure that the terms of the FERC licenses are fully implemented over the long-term.
  - 2.1. Strategy: Monitor and engage in the long-term implementation of the YRDP and YBDS licenses.

*Please note: Some of the preceding goals are dependent upon additional resources, new staff capacity, and increased volunteer participation in order to be fully implemented. We need your support – please donate today.*

## River Science: General

**Core goal:** Ensure that SYRCL conducts and disseminates the best available science.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Be recognized as a comprehensive and authoritative source of scientific information about the Yuba River watershed.
- 2) Build lasting coalitions and partnerships to collect and share scientific information and promote research about Yuba River issues.

### **Background:**

The purpose of SYRCL's River Science program is to collect scientific data about the Yuba River watershed and to ensure that our policy, water quality monitoring, restoration, and education work is informed by the best available science. The River Science program continuously reassesses itself as new information about the Yuba River becomes available; this is especially important within the context of climate change.

Specifically, the River Science department guides our River Monitoring, River Restoration, River Policy, and River Education programs. The River Science program provides SYRCL with the authority to be in the forefront of scientific and policy discussions about the Yuba River.

SYRCL's River Science Program emphasizes that the Yuba River watershed provides ecosystem services that benefit the local community and allows our region to mitigate the impacts of climate change, adapting to future conditions. SYRCL quantifies these benefits through conducting science and partnering with other scientists. Our work centers on improving and understanding ecosystem function through restoration, supporting the protection and restoration of habitats to increase biodiversity and connectivity, managing water to protect habitats, agriculture and communities, and understanding the function that vegetation and soil play in the carbon cycle.

SYRCL provides careful scientific oversight in a variety of ways, such as ensuring that the impacts of our restoration program and water quality monitoring data are credible and scientifically sound, and that our advocacy arguments are defensible. SYRCL trains Citizen Scientists from our community who become active members of our science team, collecting data alongside our science staff. SYRCL's scientists work collaboratively with researchers from universities, agencies, and other NGO's to expand our capacity to conduct research through the assistance of professors, researchers, and graduate students.

Guided by science, SYRCL is viewed as a respected partner in the scientific, policy, land management, and decision-making forums concerning the Yuba River.

### **Objectives & Strategies:**

1. Objective: Be recognized as a comprehensive and authoritative source of scientific information about the Yuba River watershed.

- 1.1. Strategy: Conduct scientific research about important issues facing the Yuba River watershed.

- 1.2. Strategy: Publish findings about the Yuba River watershed in scientific journals and present at scientific conferences.
  - 1.3. Strategy: Ensure that SYRCL's program work is developed, reviewed, and supported by the best available science.
  - 1.4. Strategy: Serve as a community resource for Yuba River watershed information online and in the office.
  - 1.5. Strategy: Maintain SYRCL's role as a scientific leader in order to positively influence legal, regulatory, and management processes and outcomes. (see River Advocacy)
- 
2. Objective: Build lasting coalitions and partnerships to collect and share scientific information and promote conservation, education, and research about Yuba River issues.
    - 2.1. Strategy: Continue to strengthen partnerships with local and regional academic institutions to build research programs that focus on Yuba River specific questions.
    - 2.2. Strategy: Continue to forge effective partnerships and coalitions with local, statewide, and national NGOs who bring scientific capacity to the Yuba River watershed.
    - 2.3. Strategy: Strengthen and maintain contacts with staff of natural resource agencies with responsibilities in the Yuba River to ensure that federal, state, and local scientific and resource priorities are addressed.

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## River Science: River Restoration

**Core goal:** Improve the resiliency of the Yuba River watershed by implementing habitat restoration projects that protect the river, wildlife, forests, and meadows especially in the face of climate change.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Improve habitat conditions in the Yuba River watershed so that salmon, steelhead, green sturgeon, and other wildlife thrive.
- 2) Improve forest health to restore habitat and protect the watershed from catastrophic fire and other threats.
- 3) Improve the health of meadows to restore habitat and water benefits to the Yuba River watershed.

### **Background:**

SYRCL's science-based restoration work is focused on implementing restoration projects, which are informed by the best available science and add to the greater body of knowledge about how the ecosystem and target species benefit from habitat restoration. Our projects focus on creating fish spawning and rearing habitat, restoring forest resiliency, and promoting meadow health. SYRCL focuses on restoring ecosystem function and monitoring critical watershed features in the face of historic habitat degradation and climate change.

SYRCL's restoration program now boasts the completion of four meadow restoration projects, conifer removal in a dozen aspen stands, and a handful of in-process restoration projects in the Lower Yuba River. These are large-scale restoration efforts that are multi-year and require multi-agency partnerships, contractors, large equipment, and place an emphasis on long-term monitoring.

#### *Lower Yuba Restoration*

Restoration in the Lower Yuba is focused on protecting habitat and creating riparian and floodplain habitat connectivity, fish spawning and rearing habitat, and ensuring that fish can swim freely within the 24-mile stretch of river.

After successfully implementing a 5-acre riparian planting project on Hammon Bar in 2011 and 2012, SYRCL continues to work on Lower Yuba Restoration projects that target the restoration or rehabilitation of salmon spawning and rearing habitat and riparian/wildlife habitat. Over the next three years, SYRCL is funded to partner with the Hallwood Restoration Team to restore over 170 acres and 7 miles of habitat and will lead the Long Bar Restoration Project to restore 50 acres and 2 miles of habitat. In addition, SYRCL will work to secure additional planning and implementation funds for new restoration and land acquisition projects. This work is conducted in partnership with government agencies, private consultants, and local land owners among others.

### *Forest Health*

Forest health in the Yuba River watershed will become a key focus of our work over the next five years. SYRCL will partner with the USFS and local land trusts to plan and implement forest health projects across the Yuba watershed. Removal of invasive plants will reduce fire risk and improve biodiversity. Remediating abandoned mine lands will protect the watershed from legacy mining impacts like mercury and sediment contamination. Promoting sustainable farming practices, ensuring implementation of state and local regulations and remediating illegal grow sites will protect the Yuba watershed from the cumulative impact of cannabis farms as the industry grows.

### *Meadow Restoration*

Meadow restoration is focused on restoring ecosystem function and protecting headwater environments that are particularly vulnerable to climate change to improve groundwater storage, maintain summer stream flows, improve water quality, increase carbon sequestration, and bolster species diversity within the watershed. Over the past several years, SYRCL's meadow restoration program has grown from removal of encroaching conifers in aspen stands on meadow edges to full scale hydrologic restoration efforts with co-benefit monitoring in a handful of meadows across the Yuba watershed. Today, SYRCL is working on restoring over 1000 acres of meadows in the Yuba watershed. SYRCL is partnering with the USFS, local land trusts, universities, the Sierra Meadow Partnership, and others to complete this work.

Much of our restoration work is undertaken in partnership with government agencies and other NGOs. Engaging volunteers wherever possible in this restoration work is a priority. Whether our restoration projects are large or small, they will actively improve watershed-wide resiliency, will be monitored to evaluate success, and will engage and educate the community about the benefits of restoration.

### **Objectives & Strategies:**

1. Objective: Improve habitat conditions in the Yuba River watershed so that salmon, steelhead, green sturgeon, and other wildlife thrive.
  - 1.1 Strategy: Design and construct new side-channels, backwaters or functional floodplain areas and spawning habitat that contribute to the productivity, diversity, and survival of salmon and steelhead in the Lower Yuba River.
  - 1.2 Strategy: Produce reports that quantify the benefits of restoration actions in the Lower Yuba River.
  - 1.3 Strategy: Facilitate large-scale land conservation efforts to protect habitat that is at risk from development or requires restoration.
  - 1.4 Strategy: Create recreation opportunities and improve public access in order to educate the public about river issues and to build support for restoration activities.
2. Objective: Improve forest health to restore habitat and protect the watershed from catastrophic fire and other threats.
  - 2.2 Strategy: Collaborate with partners to plan and implement forest health projects.
  - 2.3 Strategy: Collaborate with partners to document and address the negative environmental impacts of cannabis cultivation within the Yuba River watershed.
  - 2.4 Strategy: Remove invasive plants in order to reduce fire risk and improve biodiversity.

- 2.5 Strategy: Remediate impacts associated with abandoned mine lands along the Yuba River corridor.
- 3. Objective: Improve the health of meadows to restore habitat, carbon, and water benefits to the Yuba River watershed.
  - 3.2 Strategy: Collaborate with partners to assess meadows and to plan and implement Yuba headwater meadow restoration projects.
  - 3.3 Strategy: Collaborate with partners to monitor and quantify the benefits of meadow restoration and ecosystem service value of restoring these habitats.
  - 3.4 Strategy: Produce reports that quantify the benefits of completed meadow restoration projects as measured during the restoration process.

*Please note: Some of the preceding goals are dependent upon additional resources, new staff capacity, and increased volunteer participation in order to be fully implemented. We need your support – please donate today.*

## River Science: River Monitoring

**Core goal:** Collect and interpret water quality data to assess the health of the Yuba River and its tributaries to identify threats, impacts, and ensure regulatory compliance.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Collect quality data to detect and document threats and impacts to the Yuba River and its tributaries.
- 2) Ensure that water quality monitoring results are used in decision-making processes about Yuba River issues.
- 3) Demonstrate the scientific value and results of water quality monitoring.

### Background:

Since 2000, SYRCL's citizen-science based water quality monitoring program has monitored and assessed water quality conditions across the Yuba River watershed.

Led by a detailed River Monitoring Plan, SYRCL science staff and citizen scientists have identified seven priority issues and are conducting in-depth sampling efforts to document threats across the Yuba River watershed. SYRCL's River Monitoring Plan, adopted in 2014, investigates specific water quality concerns including: long term monitoring and trends, mine land streams, dam-affected reaches, development impacts in the upper South Yuba River watershed, nutrient and chemical run-off, and invasive and sensitive species. SYRCL's River Monitoring Program is at the heart of SYRCL's commitment to the health and the community value of the Yuba River.

Since 2000, more than sixty trained volunteer River Monitors collect high-quality data at nearly forty sites on a monthly basis in order to establish baseline conditions, investigate specific concerns, and evaluate trends. The program methods are based on a scientifically credible Quality Assurance Project Plan approved by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. SYRCL publishes River Monitoring data at [www.yubashed.org](http://www.yubashed.org) so that the information is publicly available and comprehensible to our members, scientists and researchers, and public agencies.

This strategic plan calls for the continued implementation of the 2014 River Monitoring Plan to collect high-quality baseline data while targeting specific concerns with new plans and resources. In addition, the River Monitoring Program will continue to support our restoration projects by monitoring restoration site hydrology, sensitive and invasive species, and collecting before, during, and after data essential for monitoring long term change and to respond to new concerns across the watershed.

### Objectives & Strategies:

1. Objective: Collect quality data to detect and document threats and impacts to the Yuba River and its tributaries.

- 1.1. Strategy: Review, update, and implement the River Monitoring Plan to ensure that we are addressing the most current, pressing needs in the Yuba River watershed.
- 1.2. Strategy: Ensure the River Monitoring Plan and any water quality testing methods are consistent with the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and current scientific standards.
- 1.3. Strategy: Conduct regular review of data to identify threats and report findings to stakeholders.
- 1.4. Strategy: Develop and implement a comprehensive flow monitoring and report system.
2. Objective: Ensure that river monitoring results are used in decision-making processes about Yuba River issues.
  - 2.1. Strategy: Increase support and utilization of river monitoring data in scientific decision-making processes and collaborative forums.
3. Objective: Ensure that our partners and the community are engaged and understand the benefits and results of river monitoring.
  - 3.1. Strategy: Provide updates to river monitors and community members about the results from monitoring activities and the program.

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## River People

**Core goal:** Strive to be the leader in the Yuba River watershed for community engagement, outreach, activism, and information exchange concerning watershed issues.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Engage volunteers to protect the Yuba by supporting SYRCL's programs in science, monitoring, education, policy, outreach, restoration, or events.
- 2) Raise awareness about SYRCL's efforts and activities.
- 3) Create a culture of environmental stewardship that benefits the Yuba River watershed, especially through the annual Yuba River Cleanup and summer-time River Ambassador Program.

### Background:

The River People program is at the heart of SYRCL's mission to *unite the community*. It is where our members and volunteers come together to take action, exchange information, and engage with our diverse neighbors and visitors. This is why River Ambassadors and the Yuba River Cleanup are critical – they are opportunities to create a culture of river stewardship and to connect with the community at large. The numbers behind SYRCL's people-powered activities are staggering: more than 800 people volunteer for the Yuba River Cleanup each fall, more than 600 support the Wild & Scenic Film Festival every January, up to 80 volunteers are trained River Monitors, and another 40 serve as River Ambassadors.

#### *SYRCL's Volunteer Program*

This strategic plan calls for increasing the number of volunteers in all aspects of SYRCL's work and raising the visibility of Yuba River issues throughout the community to encourage increased stewardship.

#### *Yuba River Cleanup*

SYRCL's River People program engages the community annually in the Yuba River Cleanup the 3rd Saturday of September. Over the past 21 cleanups (1998-2018), our volunteers have removed more than 190,483 pounds of trash and 43,154 pounds of recyclables (greater than 100 tons) from 80-90 miles of rivers and creeks. Our vision is that more and more families, from Marysville to Placerville, from Camptonville to Truckee and beyond, will join the annual fall Cleanup. As our region experiences the effects of climate change, our Cleanup is evolving to deal with these effects, especially with how humans use and impact rivers, streams and public land that protects them. This beloved event is one of this region's great unifiers.

#### *River Ambassadors*

In 2012, we recognized that a one-day-a-year cleanup was no longer enough to deal with the ever-increasing number of river visitors. Thanks to our long-term partnership with California State Parks, SYRCL's River Ambassador program recruits and trains volunteers to speak one-on-one with visitors at the four major crossings within the South Yuba River State Park. Using a friendly, non-confrontational approach, River Ambassadors educate folks about the polluting impacts of trash and dog waste, the



dangers of broken glass, and the catastrophic potential of wildfire. As of 2018, River Ambassadors logged 6,057 hours on the river and spoke with 48,757 people about Yuba stewardship. Our goal is to continue to engage South Yuba River State Park visitors while searching for opportunities to replicate our own model on other areas of public land within our watershed.

### **Objectives & Strategies:**

1. Objective: Engage volunteers to protect the Yuba by supporting SYRCL's programs in science, monitoring, education, policy, outreach, restoration, or events.
  - 1.1. Strategy: Continue to build a thriving volunteer program that connects new and returning volunteers to SYRCL's various programs and projects.
  - 1.2. Strategy: Create effective processes for the recruitment, supervision, and recognition of volunteers by developing a volunteer handbook and standard operating procedures that are updated annually.
2. Objective: Raise awareness about SYRCL's programs, events, advocacy, membership, and volunteer opportunities. (Also see Communications)
  - 2.1. Strategy: Build a robust SYRCL outreach presence throughout the watershed community and expand into new geographies to build SYRCL's constituencies.
  - 2.2. Strategy: Produce events designed to educate, foster stewardship, build community, and raise funds.
  - 2.3. Strategy: Support Development by instituting best practices for attracting new members and volunteers via web, social, and email.
  - 2.4. Strategy: Build awareness among volunteer corps of the importance of membership and annual financial support.
3. Objective: Create a culture of environmental stewardship that benefits the Yuba River watershed.
  - 3.1. Strategy: Produce the annual Yuba River Cleanup to unite the community to clean and restore the river each fall.
  - 3.2. Strategy: Implement and expand the River Ambassador program to educate and motivate visitors to the Yuba and Bear Rivers to become river stewards.
  - 3.3. Strategy: Continue to produce an annual "State of the Yuba" event that engages the community in volunteer opportunities and showcases SYRCL's leadership in the watershed.
  - 3.4. Strategy: Develop opportunities and processes to easily connect volunteers with SYRCL's numerous projects and programs, making the volunteer program work across all departments.
  - 3.5. Explore the feasibility of creating a brick-and-mortar "Yuba River Welcome Center" that also houses the SYRCL office.

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## River Education

**Core goal:** Educate people of all ages and backgrounds representative of the communities within the watershed to be informed and passionate stewards of the Yuba watershed and effective, lifelong advocates for its protection.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Inspire students and adults to value the watershed.
- 2) Motivate people of all ages to understand our changing climate and conserve water use in their homes and schools.
- 3) Create linkages between the River Education program and the rest of SYRCL's work in the watershed.

### Background:

SYRCL provides education that aims to create life-long stewards of the Yuba River watershed. We do this through programs and curriculum that incorporate lessons about watershed health, Yuba salmon, climate change, water conservation, outdoor experiential learning, and scientific monitoring. To accomplish our goals and objectives, we strive to utilize high quality curricula that are in accordance with local, state, and national standards; empower, engage, and collaborate with local teachers and administrators; and create linkages between the River Education program and other areas of SYRCL's work.

#### *Yuba Salmon Expeditions*

Many Yuba watershed residents are unaware that 300,000 salmon once returned to the Yuba every year before the major dams were built; now as few as 3,000 return annually. We offer rafting and walking Salmon Expeditions for school groups and the public to learn about the salmon life cycle first-hand. Between 500 and 700 students participate in our Salmon Tours each fall – and we hope to see that number grow each year.

#### *School Assemblies*

Our program reaches students within their schools aiming to make watershed stewardship an annual topic. We do this by offering two interactive assembly programs, “The Great Water Mystery” and “Journey of the Salmon.” Having reached over 20,000 students from 2015-2018, our goal is to continue to offer these popular programs to youth region-wide. And, SYRCL's water audit program allows students to take action to conserve water at their very own schools.

#### *Field Science*

Our Field Science Program engages high school students to experience first-hand what it means to work as a field scientist. We take groups of students on multi-day field trips to learn about the Yuba River watershed and become citizen scientists by assisting with monitoring our restoration projects and water quality across the watershed and participating in restoration work. This experiential, outdoor learning opportunity allows them to participate in SYRCL's work and expose them to field work.

### *Youth Environmentalist of the Year Scholarship*

High school graduates with a commitment to the environment are encouraged to apply for SYRCL's "Youth Environmentalist of the Year" scholarship. Since 2002, SYRCL has awarded a \$4,000 college scholarship each year.

### **Objectives & Strategies:**

1. Objective: Inspire students and adults to value the watershed.
  - 1.1. Strategy: Sustain, improve, and expand Yuba Salmon Expeditions.
  - 1.2. Strategy: Continue to offer SYRCL's Salmon Assembly program in schools.
  - 1.3. Strategy: Facilitate in-classroom activities that complement the Salmon Expeditions and Salmon Assembly programs.
  - 1.4. Strategy: Offer educational watershed excursions to community members of all ages.
  - 1.5. Strategy: Provide an annual "SYRCL Environmentalist of the Year" scholarship to graduating high school seniors who have shown a passion for the Yuba River watershed.
2. Objective: Motivate people of all ages to understand our changing climate and conserve water use in their homes and schools.
  - 2.1 Strategy: Sustain, improve, and expand the Great Water Mystery water conservation school assembly program.
  - 2.2 Strategy: Implement school water audit curriculum for local students.
  - 2.3 Strategy: Develop outreach strategies and materials to inform the public about climate change and how to take action to conserve water.
3. Objective: Create linkages between the River Education program and the rest of SYRCL's work in the watershed.
  - 3.1 Strategy: Provide opportunities for partners, members, and the general public to learn about current issues regarding the Yuba River.
  - 3.2 Strategy: Continue to recruit interns to educate and empower local high school students to take action in their community.
  - 3.3 Strategy: Implement and sustain an annual summer science (Field Science) program for high school students.
  - 3.4 Strategy: Increase the participation of local school groups in SYRCL's programs.
  - 3.5 Strategy: Produce annual WSFF School Program in coordination with WSFF.

*Please note: Some of the preceding goals are dependent upon additional resources, new staff capacity, and increased volunteer participation in order to be fully implemented. We need your support – please donate today.*

## Wild & Scenic Film Festival

**Core goal:** Produce a world-class, sustainable, and financially successful Wild & Scenic Film Festival that educates and inspires activism in our watershed and communities around the globe.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Produce an excellent film festival that inspires activism and shows a love and appreciation for the natural world.
- 2) Raise funds with both January's Flagship Film Festival and On Tour Program in order to support SYRCL's year-round work.
- 3) Grow the number of On Tour events to increase environmental awareness and revenue while maintaining the highest quality product.
- 4) Ensure the festival benefits the local economy, engages local businesses, and demonstrates SYRCL's role as a community leader and economic driver.
- 5) Commit to developing and continually improving the event's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to create a platform that reflects the differences among us and promotes justice for all life on Earth.
- 6) Create and deliver engaging and educational programming for attendees of all ages.

### Background:

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival enters its 18<sup>th</sup> year in 2020 with a strong foundation and a proven track record of success. What began as a two-day festival with one venue has grown to a five-day festival with more than ten film venues in both Nevada City and Grass Valley. In 2019, more than 7,500 people attended the festival from near and far with 60% of the audience coming from the local area.

The film festival aims to inspire environmental action. We strive for excellence among environmental film festivals by weaving together an exciting and layered program that combines cutting edge films, activist workshops, art, music, and celebrations. In addition, the festival is a boost to our local economy including employment and tourism.

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival seeks to expose local youth to the power of film as an artistic medium and vehicle for civic engagement. Our Youth Education Program brings world class environmental film screenings, curriculum, and workshops to schoolchildren. In 2019, we presented three curated school programs to 2,400 K-12 students.

The Wild & Scenic Film Festival On Tour brings together the best of the home festival's films in an evening program designed to provide other national and international organizations with a turn-key event to increase their membership, raise funds, and inspire activism in their community. In 2018, the On Tour

program partnered to produce more than 225 events globally, raising funds for those partner organizations as well as funds to support our year-round work.

### **Objectives & Strategies:**

1. Objective: Produce an excellent film festival that inspires activism and shows a love and appreciation for the natural world.
  - 1.1. Strategy: Develop a dynamic and layered festival program that presents issues in multiple ways engaging the audience with film, workshops, and visual and performing arts.
  - 1.2. Strategy: Attract representation from at least 60% of accepted films to the festival.
  - 1.3. Strategy: Promote and encourage participation in SYRCL's current work and campaigns throughout the festival.
  - 1.4. Strategy: Utilize effective PR, marketing, social medial, and branding strategy to promote the festival and reach new and diverse audiences.
2. Objective: Raise funds with both the January's Flagship Film Festival and On Tour Program in order to support SYRCL's year-round work.
  - 2.1. Strategy: Engage national, regional, and local partners as major financial sponsors of the film festival.
  - 2.2. Strategy: Maximize ticket sales with a multi-venue plan to help ensure a positive experience for attendees.
  - 2.3. Strategy: Continue to grow the festival in Grass Valley.
  - 2.4. Strategy: Expand the number of local "off-season" events.
3. Objective: Grow the number of On Tour events to increase environmental awareness and revenue while maintaining the highest quality product.
  - 3.1. Strategy: Develop and refine a suite of products and services to offer for sale to On Tour Hosts.
  - 3.2. Strategy: Create promotional materials that communicate our sales pitch in compelling ways.
  - 3.3. Strategy: Attend, present Wild & Scenic programming, and exhibit at relevant conferences to build new contacts.
  - 3.4. Strategy: Invest in systems that increase efficiency with sales communications and customer relations.
4. Objective: Ensure the festival benefits the local economy and demonstrates SYRCL's role as a community leader and economic driver.
  - 4.1. Strategy: Engage local businesses to raise awareness and participation with the festival.
  - 4.2. Strategy: Align the festival with regional tourism efforts, boosting numbers of visitors in a traditionally slow time of year.
  - 4.3. Strategy: Create linkages between the festival's operations and programs to the sense of place in Nevada County and stewardship of our local resources.

5. Objective: Commit to developing and continually improving the event’s equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts to create a platform that reflects the differences among us and promotes justice for all life on Earth.
  - 5.1 Strategy: Showcase diverse programming that amplifies marginalized voices, highlights under-represented identities and unique perspectives, and reflects the true heterogeneity of our planet and the human experience.
  - 5.2 Strategy: Create greater access for and purposefully appeal to new and varied communities and groups that have not yet participated in the event.
6. Objective: Create and deliver engaging and educational programming for attendees of all ages.
  - 6.1. Strategy: Create space for youth to lead, participate, and meaningfully engage in festival activities.
  - 6.2. Strategy: Partner with River Education department to continue and expand Wild & Scenic Film Festival school program. *(see also River Education)*
  - 6.3. Strategy: Expand reach of school programs through our On Tour program.

*Please note: Some of the preceding goals are dependent upon additional resources, new staff capacity, and increased volunteer participation in order to be fully implemented. We need your support – please donate today.*

## Development & Membership

**Core goal:** Meet SYRCL's financial needs through diverse income sources and build a sustainable funding base that includes individuals, businesses, and organizations who are financially committed to SYRCL's long term vision and sustainability.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Continue to build and steward a dedicated base of individual donors through an Annual Giving program.
- 2) Develop and grow a well-recognized Planned Giving program.
- 3) Involve major donors and philanthropists in our long-term vision and provide this constituency with opportunities to advance our five-year plan.
- 4) Engage local, regional, state, and national businesses with our mission through sponsorship and membership opportunities.
- 5) Increase the number of private, family and corporate foundations, public agencies, and other grant makers as funders and partners in our programs through active solicitation and stewardship.
- 6) Build capacity within SYRCL's Board of Directors and Community Advisory Board so that members are able to embrace a culture of philanthropy and actively participate in the development process.

### **Background:**

SYRCL's members *are* the lifeblood of SYRCL. Our large, active grassroots membership not only financially sustains the organization, but also has influence on how decisions are made in the watershed.

SYRCL aims to have diverse and stable funding sources in order to support the strategic growth of core program areas, staffing, and administrative needs. Our Development work seeks to engage watershed residents, local and regional business owners, and downstream beneficiaries whose support lends credibility to our advocacy and funds our programs.

Currently, we receive funding from the following diverse sources: Emerald Circle (major donors), business sponsors, membership, foundation and agency grants, the Wild & Scenic Film Festival and On Tour programs, earned income, and other events including the Yuba River Cleanup's Clean-a-thon and the State of the Yuba.

Moving forward, we seek to increase the long-term sustainability of our revenue by cultivating new members; respectfully stewarding existing donors; promoting memberships with the Emerald Circle

Giving Society and our Planned Giving Circle; soliciting new business sponsors to support our events; and prospecting for new grants to support our programs.

### **Objectives & Strategies:**

1. Objective: Continue to build and steward a dedicated base of individual donors through an Annual Giving program.
  - 1.1. Strategy: Create an annual Fundraising Plan and donor stewardship standard operating procedure manual.
  - 1.2. Strategy: Expand SYRCL's membership program into important geographic communities who have a relationship to the Yuba-Bear watershed.
  - 1.3. Strategy: Grow our "Sustainers" (monthly giving program) in both numbers and income.
  - 1.4. Strategy: Create an annual new member acquisition plan (as part of the annual Fundraising Plan) that utilizes special events, outreach, social media, web, digital marketing, community engagement, and other channels to attract new members. (Also see River People and Wild & Scenic Film Festival).
2. Objective: Develop and grow a well-recognized Planned Giving program.
  - 2.1. Strategy: Relaunch and rebrand SYRCL's current planned giving society and develop a marketing and outreach plan for members and planned giving professionals.
  - 2.2. Strategy: Increase percentage number of stock gifts, IRAs, and bequests.
  - 2.3. Strategy: Grow roster of self-identified planned giving donors and recognize them with "giving circle" -type benefits and regular communication.
3. Objective: Involve major donors and individual philanthropists in our long-term vision and provide this constituency with opportunities to advance our five-year plan
  - 3.1. Strategy: Grow membership in the Emerald Circle Giving Society.
  - 3.2. Strategy: Develop opportunities for philanthropists to contribute to major programs and special projects, such as land acquisition, riparian and meadow habitat restoration, water quality monitoring, river education, Yuba River Waterkeeper, community outreach, among others.
  - 3.3. Strategy: Develop a system to report project outcomes and conservation impact to major donors.
  - 3.4. Strategy: Create and promote a \$10,000+ level Giving Society to cultivate and recruit a cadre of committed Yuba River philanthropists.
4. Objective: Engage local, regional, state and national businesses with our mission through sponsorship and membership opportunities.
  - 4.1. Strategy: Grow business membership through renewals and new acquisition.
  - 4.2. Strategy: Continue to hold successful community events and fundraising events that offer appealing recognition for business sponsors (also see River People and WSFF).
  - 4.3. Strategy: Develop an annual sponsorship fundraising plan and stewardship standard operating procedures (SOP) to ensure regular communications, outreach, recognition and appreciation.



5. Objective: Increase the number and value of private, family and corporate foundations, public agencies and other grant makers as funders and partners in our conservation, education, science, advocacy and outreach programs through active solicitation and stewardship.
  - 5.1. Strategy: Prospect and apply for grants to support SYRCL's programs and meet budget goals.
  - 5.2. Strategy: Develop and steward long-term relationships with grant makers so SYRCL is seen as a strategic partner in watershed restoration and conservation.
6. Objective: Build capacity within SYRCL's Board of Directors and Community Advisory Board so that members are able to embrace a culture of philanthropy and actively participate in the development process.
  - 6.1. Strategy: Support the Board of Directors to set fundraising/friend-raising goals and accountability for Board engagement, including a high-level donor stewardship goal.
  - 6.2. Strategy: Provide fundraising training for Board members and assist in the development of personal fundraising/friend-raising plans.
  - 6.3. Strategy: Include fundraising/friend-raising Board reporting at each Board meeting. Provide support and appreciation for efforts.

*Please note: Some of the preceding goals are dependent upon additional resources, new staff capacity, and increased volunteer participation in order to be fully implemented. We need your support – please donate today*

## Communications

**Core goal:** Position SYRCL as a leader to funders, partners, members, volunteers, and decision-makers by telling compelling stories about our work that (a) showcase programs, partnerships, and impact and (b) inspire people to take meaningful action within the Yuba watershed and beyond.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Produce compelling content from across SYRCL's programs that may be showcased through our various channels, including web, email, social media, press releases, e-newsletters.
- 2) Cultivate relationships with reporters, news outlets, and influential publications.
- 3) Leverage storytelling and media coverage into fund development success and donor engagement.
- 4) Objective: Develop a business plan for building communications capacity and hiring staff.

### Background:

SYRCL's communications processes historically have been managed in the River People department. The exception has been the Wild & Scenic Film Festival, which has contracted with several professionals to manage public relations during the Flagship Festival as well as managed its own communication actions, such as social media, website and e-news. While this decentralized communication effort has been effective to date, the inherent silo this creates between the Film Festival and the broader organization leads to inefficiencies—there are two websites, two brands, two e-newsletters and two social media profiles – all of which require a great deal of attention to coordinate.

Since SYRCL reached its 35th anniversary and began a new strategic planning process, we have concluded that communications must evolve into its own department, with its own budget and own manager or director – as funding permits. Case studies have shown that nonprofit organizations who build their communications capacity are able to maximize overall program growth and impact. We have even seen this type of investment pay off internally with the Wild & Scenic Film Festival.

Moving forward, every SYRCL department should be able to benefit from a centralized communications program. This is especially critical as SYRCL expands its reach, building ecosystem resilience in the Sierra Nevada and preparing our watershed's to face climate change. Moreover, as the Wild & Scenic Film Festival continues to build its On Tour program, we must recognize SYRCL's national and international reach and support this success intentionally, year-round.

Our vision at the end of five years is to have a fully functioning communications department that provides leadership in showcasing our impact and evolving our brand in conservation, community engagement, and fundraising.

## Objectives & Strategies:

1. Objective: Produce compelling content from across SYRCL's programs that may be showcased through our various channels, including web, email, social media, press releases, e-newsletters, and print collateral.
  - 1.1 Strategy: Develop an annual communications action plan that engages SYRCL staff across departments and achieves effective storytelling across all media platforms.
  - 1.2 Strategy: Institute best management practices and tools for communications programs, such as editorial calendars, audience targeting, audience profiles, and brand awareness guidelines.
  - 1.3 Keep all websites fresh and updated, redesigning as needed to reflect current trends in website development and expectations regarding user interface.
2. Objective: Cultivate relationships with reporters, news outlets, and influential publications.
  - 2.1 Strategy: Maintain up to date reporter and media contact database.
  - 2.2 Strategy: Develop pitch strategies based on yearly calendar and big events and utilize media tours and/or press conferences during key project or campaign moments.
  - 2.3 Strategy: Develop strategies for reaching high profile publications to enhance our reach and our leadership standing.
3. Objective: Leverage storytelling and media coverage into fund development success and donor engagement.
  - 3.1 Strategy: Communicate successes—sharing big news and high-profile features with funders, members, and donors in a timely manner, especially where they have supported a specific project or campaign.
  - 3.2 Strategy: Develop timely messaging around “why membership matters” that may be used in various communications platforms. (Also see Development section 6: Building a Culture of Philanthropy).
  - 3.3 Strategy: Implement membership campaigns on social media, e-newsletters, and website posts.
  - 3.4 Strategy: Develop reports for funders and donors that communicate conservation results.
  - 3.5 Strategy: Create an annual report highlighting SYRCL's programmatic successes and financial position.
4. Objective: Develop a business plan for building communications capacity and hiring staff.
  - 4.1 Strategy: Conduct a needs assessment, in tandem with annual Communications Plan.
  - 4.2 Strategy: Develop case for support, a campaign plan, job descriptions, scopes of work, grant proposals and cultivate and solicit funders.

*Please note: Some of the preceding goals are dependent upon additional resources, new staff capacity, and increased volunteer participation in order to be fully implemented. We need your support – please donate today*

## Board Governance & Organizational Leadership

**Core goal:** Support exceptional Board governance and diverse organizational leadership which advance SYRCL's mission and long-term sustainability.

**SYRCL's objectives are to:**

- 1) Maintain a Board of Directors who are actively engaged in their oversight role and are knowledgeable about key issues that might affect SYRCL's success.
- 2) Maintain a strong, collaborative, and well-coordinated leadership team.
- 3) Involve the Board of Directors in setting strategic direction through an organizational strategic plan with attainable goals, that are updated through the annual workplan to adjust for progress, and critical opportunities with the ability to adapt and change course when circumstances require.
- 4) Structure and fund SYRCL programs so that staff and organizational stability are priorities.

### Background:

SYRCL is governed by a dedicated volunteer Board of Directors. Board Members serve on a variety of formal and *ad hoc* committees and engage in partnerships with staff and volunteers on SYRCL's programs and initiatives. By continuously improving SYRCL's governance structures, we will be more functional in our administrative, financial, advocacy, and programmatic work.

As a membership organization, SYRCL strives to be responsive to community interests. SYRCL formed a Community Advisory Board to provide feedback when it meets twice per year with the full Board and staff. SYRCL hosts the annual "State of the Yuba" event to report out on our work.

SYRCL's leadership is provided by the Executive Director as directed by the Board of Directors. The Executive Director works closely with the "leadership team" (program leads) to promote cross collaboration among the departments and manage day-to-day operations. Regular "all hands" staff meetings are designed to coordinate collaboration and share information.

### Objectives & Strategies:

1. Objective: Maintain a Board of Directors who are actively engaged in their oversight role and are knowledgeable about key issues that might affect SYRCL's success.
  - 1.1 Strategy: The Board focuses on policy development, strategic direction, and evaluation of the organization. Board members are well-informed through effective board meetings, retreats, information repository, staff reports, community engagements, and field visits.
  - 1.2 Strategy: The Board fosters the development of new leaders to fill future roles as needed. Board candidates are formally selected to achieve a balance of diverse skills needed to advance the work of the organization.
  - 1.3 Strategy: The Board recognizes its fiduciary and legal responsibilities and actively manages the organization's risk exposure, including financial oversight.

- 1.4 Strategy: The committee structure reflects the organization’s strategic priorities and changes those priorities when necessary to advance the mission. Committees are used effectively so that Board members with relevant skills can focus on key issues.
- 1.5 Ensure strong, consistent, and effective communication between and among SYRCL Board, and staff.
- 2. Objective: Maintain a strong, collaborative, and well-coordinated leadership team.
  - 2.1 Strategy: Maintain a system for ongoing staff professional development.
  - 2.2 Strategy: Place a priority on maximizing collaboration between departments to achieve the highest program effectiveness and efficiency.
- 3. Objective: Involve the Board of Directors in setting strategic direction through an organizational strategic plan, with attainable goals, that is updated through the annual workplan to adjust for progress, and critical opportunities with the ability to adapt and change course when circumstances require.
  - 3.1 Strategy: Track outputs and strategic outcomes and monitor tactical program performance.
  - 3.2 Strategy: Maintain a positive profile in the community and among donors and funders as a result of effective, well-managed programs.
  - 3.3 Strategy: Maintain a Community Advisory Board (CAB) of regional influencers and allies to review accomplishments and direction, advise on key aspects of SYRCL’s work plan, and provide a community voice on developing issues.
- 4. Objective: Prioritize staff and organizational stability.
  - 4.1 Strategy: Recruit and retain an adequate number of staff members to plan and execute programs as outlined in this strategic plan.
  - 4.2 Strategy: Review benefits package and maintain competitive offerings.
  - 4.3 Review and revise the SYRCL Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, and other operational documents biannually to conform to changing circumstances.

## Finance & Operations

**Core goal:** Utilize best practices to ensure sound fiscal management with strong internal controls and oversight, and create an organizational culture that supports staff in fulfilling SYRCL's mission.

**SYRCL's Objectives are to:**

- 1) Ensure SYRCL is financially healthy and follows best business practices.
- 2) Maintain human resources management to support SYRCL's dedicated staff.
- 3) Invest in systems and processes to streamline operations and improve project management.

### Background:

SYRCL's staff is passionate about the Yuba River and carrying out our mission to unite the community. As an organization, we are committed to creating a healthy, happy, and sustainable work environment.

One important measure of sustainability is our successful effort over the past three years to significantly improve SYRCL's overall fiscal health. We have focused on a strategy of revenue diversification, responsible budgeting and expense tracking, and keeping overhead and administrative costs low. As a result, we have been able to expand and improve existing programs and create new ones with a staff which has grown to 15 FTE's (full time equivalents) and 3 part-time employees in FY1819.

In terms of finances, SYRCL income has increased from approximately \$1.86 million in FY2015-16 to \$2.22 million in FY2018-19, representing an average annual increase of approximately 6%. Conservation successes and revenue diversification across all programs account for the recent and anticipated organizational growth.

We treasure every dollar that comes in the door and account for every penny. The Board approves the annual operating budget based on detailed financial plans for each of SYRCL's projects, programs, and events. The Board and Finance Committee provide monthly oversight, and independent auditors provide annual reviews or audits. These rigorous measures provide the financial oversight to maintain SYRCL's fiscal health and stability.

### Objectives & Strategies:

1. Objective: Ensure SYRCL is financially healthy and follows best business practices.
  - 1.1. Strategy: Operate based on a Board-approved annual budget with monthly reporting and annual audits or reviews to maximize fiscal transparency and integrity.
  - 1.2. Strategy: Maximize the allowable overhead and administration costs that can be recovered through grant programs by annually recertifying for the best NICRA rate allowable.
  - 1.3. Strategy: Continue to improve financial management and fundraising database systems to provide up-to-date, accurate, and useful reporting and programmatic support.

- 1.4. Strategy: Ensure that SYRCL's facility, equipment, furniture, information technology and software are adequate, current, and healthful.
  - 1.5. Strategy: Ensure that SYRCL's central filing system is well organized in both electronic and hard copy files.
  - 1.6. Strategy: Create a library of governance and administrative documents and establish an annual monitoring process to ensure a periodic review and update as needed.
  - 1.7. Strategy: Prioritize developing a long-term sustainability plan that includes financial management, succession planning, a three to six month operating reserve, and risk management.
2. Objective: Improve human resources management to support SYRCL's dedicated staff.
    - 2.1. Strategy: Provide continual oversight of all aspects of human resources including hiring, salaries and benefits, and annual reviews.
    - 2.2. Strategy: Recruit, develop, retain, and recognize quality staff, and ensure that SYRCL remains competitive with regard to employee salaries and benefits.
3. Objective: Invest in systems and processes to streamline operations and improve project management.
    - 3.1. Strategy: Research and implement an enterprise-style database system that works for organization-wide needs or has integration with currently used systems.
    - 3.2. Strategy: Research and implement project management systems that encourage effective inter-team and cross-departmental collaboration, and communication.
    - 3.3. Strategy: Where in accord with our vision, evaluate opportunities to act as fiscal agents for other organizations to further our community's goals.

## Acronyms list

CAB: Community Advisory Board  
CHRC: California Hydropower Reform Coalition  
DFW: State Department of Fish and Wildlife  
EIS: Environmental Impact Statement  
FERC: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
FWN: Foothills Water Network  
NGO: Non-Governmental Organization  
NID: Nevada Irrigation District  
NMFS: National Marine Fisheries Service  
PG&E: Pacific Gas and Electric  
QAPP: Quality Assurance Project Plan  
SMRRP: Sierra Meadow Restoration Research Partnership  
SYRCL: South Yuba River Citizens League  
TNF: Tahoe National Forest  
USFS: United States Forest Service  
USFWS: United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
WSFF: Wild & Scenic Film Festival  
YBDS: Yuba Bear Drum Spaulding projects  
YWA: Yuba Water Agency  
YRDP: Yuba River Development Project